COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Government Reform to Examine Management of U.S. Flu Vaccine Supply

How did we go from shortage to surplus in just a few months?
Did U.S. health officials properly manage this season's vaccine supply?
Are there lessons learned that will help in the future?

What: Full Committee Oversight Hearing, "The Perplexing Shift from Shortage to Surplus: Managing This Season's Flu Shot Supply and Preparing For the Future"

When: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2005, 10:00 A.M.

Where: ROOM 2154 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Also: **Flu Shot Clinic**

In conjunction with the hearing, Chairman Davis has arranged for George Washington University to run a clinic to make flu shots available to the public. The clinic will be held in Room 2247 of the Rayburn House Office Building from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoon.

Background:

In the fall of 2004, U.S. health authorities warned of a shortage in the supply of influenza vaccine for the United States, due to the suspension of Chiron Corporation's manufacturing license in the United Kingdom. Chiron was supposed to provide about 46-48 million flu shots, roughly half the planned U.S. supply. Priority for receiving the vaccine was then given to members of "high-risk" populations (such as the ill, the elderly, and young children), with healthy people discouraged from getting vaccinated.

Now, some areas (generally, those states and cities that were less reliant on Chiron's vaccine) of the United States have a surplus of the flu vaccine and are encouraging the general public to receive vaccinations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are preparing to open up the federal flu vaccine stockpile to Sanofi Pasteur (formally Aventis Pasteur), which will in turn market and sell the vaccine to public and private providers. It should be noted that flu season is still in full force – cases of influenza in the United States usually peak in or around February.

This hearing will explore the impact of the various recommendations and messages about who should and should not be vaccinated, discuss what actions are being taken to plan for the next flu season, and determine what measures can be taken to avoid another mismatch between supply and demand. In addition, the Committee will receive a status report from the Food and Drug Administration regarding the implementation of Chiron's remediation plan and how the FDA is working with both British health officials and Chiron to ensure the company is capable of manufacturing vaccine this year.

Witnesses:

Panel One

Dr. Julie L. Gerberding, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dr. Jesse L. Goodman, Director, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration

Panel Two

Dr. Fay W. Boozman III, President-Elect, Association for State and Territorial Health Officials

Dr. Robert Stroube, State Health Commissioner, Virginia Department of Health

Dr. Walter A. Orenstein, Associate Director, Emory Vaccine Center

Dr. Allan G. Wasserman, Chairman, Department of Medicine, George Washington University Medical Center

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